(b) what are these other irritants and whether Government have identified them; and

(c) whether Government propose to remove such irritants to streamline smooth flow of trade between the two countries, and if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) India and Nepal have signed a Treaty of Trade in order to expand bilateral trade and encourage collaboration in economic development. Periodic talks are held at various levels to review the operation of the Treaty with the objective of removing any operational problems that may arise from time to time. There is no major problems at present.

Import of edible oil by STC

1800. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have granted permission to import edible oil to State Trading Corporation and National Dairy Development Board;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that STC was asked to import 1,50,000 tonnes of palmolein oil;

(c) if so, whether it is a fact that till the end of June'94 STC had entered into an agreement to import only 25,000 tonnes of edible oil;

(d) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard; and

(e) whether it is also a fact that due to above circumstances, the prices of edible oil, have risen by Rs. 2.00 per kg. in the month of June 1994?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. While STC has been authorised for import of RBD Palmolein for public distribution system, Deptt. of Agriculture and Co-operation has intimated that it has been decided in April, 1994 to permit NDDB to import Palmolein at concessional duty towards part reimbursement for the losses incurred by it under Market Intervention Operations (MIO) during 1991-92 and 1992-93.

(b) Initially, STC is importing sufficient quantities for meeting PDS requirements. So far it has contracted for import of 1.08 lakh tonnes of Palmolein.

(c) During the current financial year, STC had finalised contracts for import of 60,000 MT of RBD Palmolein by the end of June, 1994.

(d) STC has finalised contracts for import of 1,08,000 MTs of Palmolein for shipments during July to October 1994. As on 3.8.1994, STC had a stock of 11,853 MTs of Palmolein which has to be lifted by the states on authorisation of Deptt. of Civil Supplies.

(e) The Central Issue Price of Palmolein supplied to States/UTs for distrbition through PDS has been increased by Rs. 2,000/- per tonne in July, 1994.

Import of gold by MMTC

1801. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MMTC propose to import gold;

(b) if so, the quantity of gold likely to be imported by MMTC and the reasons therefor;

(c) the present stock position of gold with MMTC;

(d) whether the import will have any price check on gold in the market; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The quantity of gold likely to be imported by MMTC for export purposes will be based on actual requirement of the user industry. Gold is spplied at international prices to the jewellery manufacturers in EPZs/EOUs and domestic tariff area for export purposes. Some quantities are sold in the domestic market at prevalent domestic prices.

(c) As on 15.7.1994, the stock position of gold is as under:—

(Quantity in Kgs.)

For export purposes	201.0
For domestic purposes	554.0

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Free import policy of sports goods

1802. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether import of sports goods are under the free import policy of Government and if so, the names of agencies competent to import such goods; and

(b) whether any individual sportsman on the recommendation of the State level apex body of the discipline, will be allowed to import his requirement of sports material and if not, whether Government will permit the apex body at the State level to import the sporting goods?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) In terms of the provisions contained in Section A of Part-II of Chapter XV of the Export and Import Policy, 1992—97, import of sports goods and equipment is allowed against a licence or in accordance with a Public Notice issued in this behalf.

Apex Sports Organisations/Agencies and eminent sports persons have been permitted to import sports goods/equipment without a licence subject to the conditions given in Public Notice No. 115(PN)/92—97 dated the 31st March, 1993. Copy of the aforesaid Public Notice is available in the Parliament Library.

Concession on vehicles for Tourism sector

1803. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to provide highly concessional duty on car, deluxe coaches, and equipment for tourism industry to be imported under the scheme of Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) to the tourism sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof.

(c) the percentage of concessional duty to be allowed to the tourism sector on car imports;

(d) the details of number of items for which tourism sector sought concessional import duty; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Korean investment

1804. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Korea expressed its keenness recently to invest in India; and

(b) if so, what are the areas where investments are to come from that country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) The New Industrial Policy has evoked interest from investors of varius countries including Korea. Since the annuncement of New Industrial Policy 64 proposals from Korea involving foreign direct investment of 9551.36 lakhs have been approved, till the end of June, 1994.